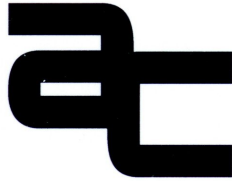
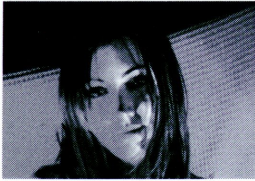


97 fall
fall

Auburn
circle



editors note

So, here it is.

If you don't know who we are, allow me to introduce ourselves. We are the school magazine, but not just any magazine. We are, as some will say, a 'General Interest Magazine.' I don't care for that phrasing, though. We strive to capture more than your general interest. I hope that we whet your mouth with our cover design. You should linger on every word that we have deemed worthy of printing. And the art work and photography -- worthy of a museum.

Someone once said that The Auburn Circle reflects the art and literature of its time. If you've ever seen the past issue covers, you know this is true. I realize that some day, someone will think the same thing about this cover, but today it reflects, as does the whole magazine, a style that is now. Today.

I want to thank everyone who played a part in making this issue what it is. Thanks to the two goofballs pictured above, and I'm sorry you don't want to put the rest of the picture in, Amie.

Auburn, this is your magazine, savor it.

stephen shows

We Are:

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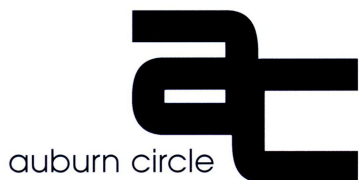
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contents:

Untitled	Bradley Bufkin	1
Kudzuvius	Tim Taylor	2
Scanning Electron Microscopy	Dr. Jennifer Spencer	3
Fish and Cake Eater	Holly Dunlap	5
The Cast	Katherine Perry	6
Climbing Lessons	Erika Shelton	7
Henry VII	Sharon Lewis	11
Reflection & Evening at the Spaghetti Opera	Sharon Lewis	12
Daddy Gave Me Away	Katherine Perry	13
Turtle	Holly Dunlap	14
Jeep Series	Chris Fogle	15



The Auburn Circle accepts works from students, staff and Alumni of Auburn University. Prose, poetry, essays and articles should be typed. The Auburn Circle has access to IBM and Macintosh computers. It is preferred that art work be submitted on slides, but originals of any size are accepted.

The Auburn Circle is located in the Publications Suite, basement of Foy Union. For more information contact us at 844-4122 or write us at:

The Auburn Circle
Publications Suite, Foy Union Building
Auburn University, AL 36849

**The Deadline for Submissions for the Winter issue is
December 5**

I
Bradley Bufkin
untitled

Sundown on Sunday we topple and crash
fading away on the cold linoleum,
of the vast floor
under high ceilings

in the monument
called home.

Two dogs, some of us, and a ferret
named Samson.

The hound and the Great Alaskan Malamute lie lazy outside
under the van.
All enclosed by the ancient fence:
wire and wood.

Inside we hoard the sound
and soothing breeze
of the window unit.

We have been fucked up
for four days.
I've been counting and
today is Sunday
March third.

Samson circles in a cage
forever frightened
forever growing old,
on the floor
in a room
in the house.

You are the moss-green vines
that no clover can disguise,
you are the weed that never
sleeps, you are the mongrel of men
spitting your claws into brown
poles, leaving them powerless to your
masses; you scamper up exit signs on
country roads where millions of marsupials
are forced into early retirement.

You
are the organic hands that wrap
around unguarded pine-apple gardens,
assailing azaleas with forklift arms
and tiller toenails; you are the evil of all
routes, uprooting eggshell egrets without
regret for thistle-twisted feats, you
dirt-dance like a chlorophyll devil, taunting
shallow shovel threats and boastfully
toasting with pesticidal brews.

You
are creeping jujitsu,
meditating with mice
and hogging hedges,
edging to engage in earth
domination, you are the green-leaf
prince clinging to poor men's sandals,
you are the vandal of childhood woods,
hiding the fangs of rattling copper mouths.

You
act like you don't exist,
knowing that you are too busy
to resist, growing like
a know-it-all tree;
you are nature's noose,
you will strangle on
your own evolution.



kudzuvius

- June 4, 1997

tim taylor

scanning electron microscopy





Dr. Jennifer Spencer



fish and cake eater

Holly Dunlap

You eat cake and fish in your blue recliner.

You have oak wood shavings for hair.

My tongue knows the taste of your mole,
like a chocolate candy, sweet with sweat
on the back of your neck.

My finger tips know your freckle sprinkled nose--leaning
crooked.

I listen to your chattering blinds in the morning, window
open,

and breathe in the trash-tainted air from the dumpster.

The train blasts outside, sounding like an open bleach bottle
under my nose.

You ordered a Goofy bar from the good Humor Ice Cream
truck

the day we met.

Or did we meet at Bruce's house on your birthday?

"Fixin' to leave for work," I think.

I took your advice, and stayed in for the day.

"It's all the same difference to me," I say.

The half empty glass of my indecision is gulped down.

You were as sexy as the fish and cake you ate.

We took a bath in a huge tub of milk.

Little Frog enjoyed her warm milk bath.

We will whisper loud silences in our hammocks in the
mountains.

We will take our time and run crazily around the woods.

Nous aimens les montanges

The mountains laugh at our loud whispers.

I taste the fish and cake that still lingers in your mouth.

Across the table,
I hesitate momentarily,
my fingers tight around the glass.
Is this, in itself, my testament?
The metaphors weaving lines to nets?
(I imagine myself mounted on the wall,
lifeless, full of feathers)

I do not move,
my not yet marbled eyes
search through your angler's glare.
I sometimes think that you're
not there - that the beating
was bird wings -
that you occasionally shine
the brass to remove the tarnish.

And so, in one quick move, I snap
the cord, throw the wine,
glass and all,
into your face.

Then still.

Beads fall smoothly down the breastplate.

As I run away,
I know that I have not finished,
that this first breath of freedom
will not last,
that I will sit across the table again,
to listen, hammer,
and nibble
on what you think
will catch me.

katherine perry

The cast

climbing

erika shelton

My brother, Roland, came home last Tuesday, bearded and smiling, and I forgave him. Mom and I were eating dinner and watching Jeopardy-- Healthy Choice frozen lasagna, U.S. Presidents for 400, and then the sound of Rolands old truck in the driveway. Mom dropped her fork and we ran outside. He was standing in the middle of the lawn, shoeless, wearing old khakis and a torn t-shirt. She cried and kissed his beard and stroked his brown hair, as if he were some sort of modern day prodigal son. I watched from the porch, remembering how easy it had been to admire him and how hard I cried one year, ten months, and two weeks ago, just six weeks before his high school graduation, when he loaded up his truck, and headed far west from our small, South Carolina town.

The carefully constructed routine of intimate indifference that mom and I had grown so accustomed to-- me in my room, reading or on the phone, and her on the porch with her cigarettes, working on cases that she should have left at the law firm-- was suddenly interrupted by Roland's arrival. We stayed up much later than usual, listening to stories about the jobs he had: playing his guitar on the street in Denver and then later in cheesy restaurants as the atmosphere guy, building resort homes for yuppies in Vail, posing for pictures for some artist lady, and finally at an outfitters shop in Boulder where he met the guys who taught him how to climb. Apparently, he was pretty good at it; he had spent the past six months in Utah in competitions. I was mesmerized by his pictures of mountains and land that were more brown and less green than I expected them to be and the one of him climbing, his body, flat against the rock, stretched and flexed, a cross between a spider and a ballet dancer.

I watched my brother and thought about how different we were, me with my fair skin and hair and eyes the

color of dark sand and him, olive, with eyes so black it is impossible to tell the iris from the pupil. I watched him make Mom laugh, a sound foreign and curious to me. I thought about how he hated our father for leaving us as children, but I was young enough to forgive. I thought about the morning I stood at the edge of the driveway, the den blanket on my shoulder like a shawl and my arm waving back and forth, as Roland drove off with dew still covering his rear window and an orange tarp shielding his possessions. He said it wasn't anger or bitterness that made him leave, but adventure, which was supposed to make it okay. And somehow it was okay when he was near; I could forgive him for only seven postcard in almost two years and not calling, not even a year ago, on my sixteenth birthday. When he went to sleep in the room across the hall, I pretended like he would stay with us forever.

On Thursday, after Mr. Welbourne went over the Pathagorean theorem, he called me to his desk and said I was excused to go to the doctor. He handed me a pink slip that read-- Beth Avins is excused to go to the gynecologist at 11:00. At first I thought it was a mistake and then I remembered Roland. He had parked his truck in front of my Civic and was sitting on top waiting for me. He laughed when I told him he embarrassed me and then said he'd make it up to me.

He took me to a pond where we used to fish as kids. The sun was bright and unusually hot for April, and the smell of honeysuckle was thick, sweet, and almost intoxicating. He took off his shirt; he was much more muscular than before. He threw me a bottle of sunscreen because he knew I would burn and then he pulled a beer and a Diet Coke from the cooler in the back, and a frisbee from his floorboard.

"Do you remember," he said, "the time we were out here playing hide-and-go-seek with Jimmy and the twins and you ran out of the woods screaming because you found a snake and then you cried when Jimmy and I stoned it?" He tossed the frisbee smooth and fast to me.

"What?"

"We had just learned about Adam and Eve in Sunday school. I was more afraid of it talking to me and making me hurt someone or something than I was of it biting me."

"You always were a freak," he said, reaching wide to catch the frisbee before it landed in the pond.

We ate the turkey sandwiches he had made and then waded in the water, the coolness of it turning my legs purple and splotchy. I told him the gossip at school and he read to me some of the stuff he had written while backpacking in the mountains. When there was a slight pause I asked, "Did you miss us?"

"Of course."

"Because Mom cried," I said, "I could hear her at night, when she thought I was asleep."

"Beth, Do you hate me?"

"No," I said and started folding our blanket and packing things to leave, feeling bad because I ruined our time together.

"Do you hate Dad?"

"No," I said. "I never did. I've told you before, I barely remember him."

"I remember. He made really good omelettes. He laughed really loud. He had a beautiful voice. Sometimes, when he was sober, he and Mom would stay up late in the den playing the piano singing."

"Oh," I didn't know what to say. I had never heard Roland talk about our father without getting angry. The thought of Mom staying up late to sing sounded fake to me.

"I woke up once in the middle of the night," Roland said, "when I was staying in Texas, and decided to forgive him."

"You were in Texas?" I asked.

"Yeah."

"I'll never leave South Carolina," I said as if he had asked me about it. I wanted badly to ask him if he was going to leave again; the words formed on my lips when his head was turned, but my vocal cords wouldn't cooperate. It was

probably better that I didn't know. It had been such a nice day.

We loaded up our stuff and he drove me back to the school parking lot to get my car. We rolled down the windows and sang along with U2 on the radio, Roland distorting his voice to match Bono's high pitch as he sang. He tapped his fingers against the steering wheel and pointed out all of the dead armadillos on the side of the road because he knew how much they grossed me out.

I woke up early Sunday morning and went to the kitchen to get some coffee. There on the small dry-erase board on the refrigerator I saw the words-- Mom and Beth, I'm gone. Call soon. Love, R. I went out to the driveway, just in case I could catch him before he left. It was empty except for the newspaper. I sat down Indian style on the driveway with my sleep shirt on, a steaming coffee mug in my hand. I thought about how much easier it would be if I could hate him or blame him for wanting to leave. I knew the moment he came back that I could never keep him. I thought about the picture of him against the mountain. How graceful and strange he looked. I thought about him climbing higher and higher and how far away the ground below him must have seemed.

Erika Shelton is a senior majoring in English. She spent her summer in East Asia with Campus Crusade for Christ. Erika aspires to be a writer, teacher, a missionary.

II

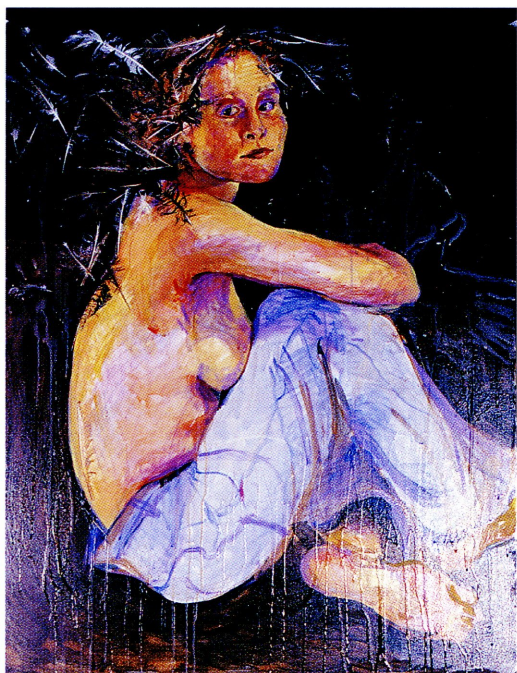
sharon lewis

HENRY VIII





evening at
the spaghetti opera



Reflection
sharon lewis

katherine perry

Daddy gave me away

over an all-you can-eat
buffet, a Gravely lawn mower
my only dowry.

So I moved to the kitchen,
where I cooked country fried steak
for a husband's fattening stomach,
and washed dirty work
uniforms to kill the smells.

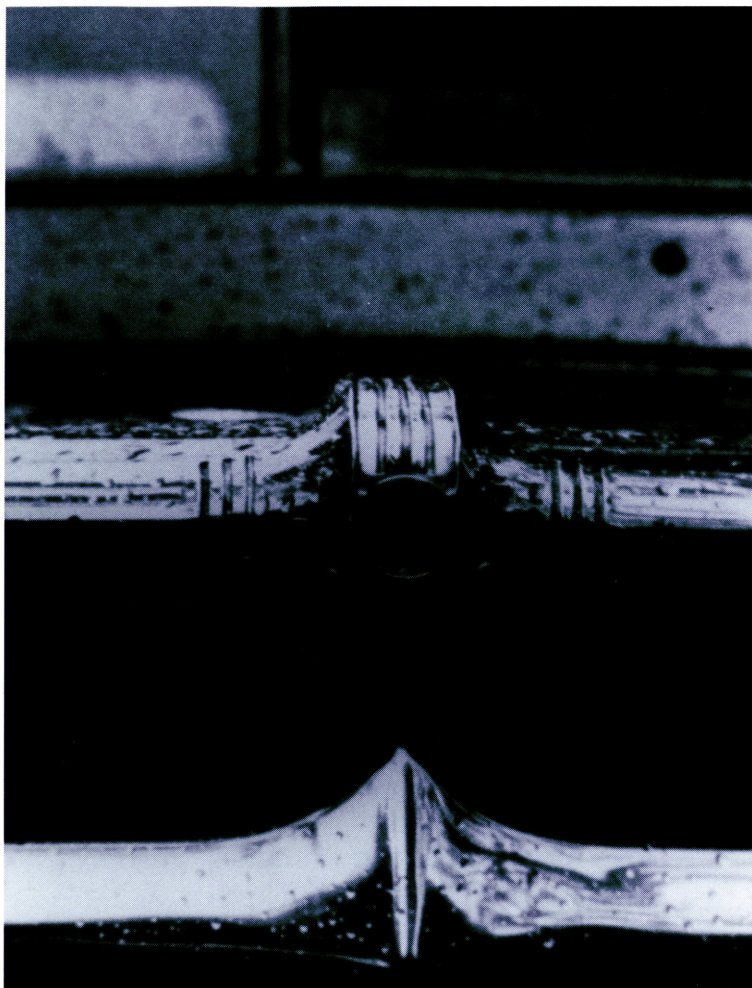
I learned recipes
by heart at first, and then
gradually learned to dash
in spices for interest,
praying for a secret ingredient,
for some perfect seasoning.

At 17, I knew nothing of the trade,
but time and heat gave rise
to a woman, and she left him,
his kitchen, stomach, mower,
and daddy, too.

No, daddy, I'm not through.
If God made man from dust,
then I can do better.

Craving something crass,
I pick cockleburrs out of the long creases
on the bottom of my toes.
They taste like the pine cones
I had yesterday morning.
I find myself cryptic and cold.
I see color
in black and white.
The contrasts of light
in black and white
take more shape than in color.
Black and white photos of
whale mothers, and fish schools
and coral-lined beaches;
In walls of withering-white sand.
These visions disillusion me.
I wallow in the gray-cold fusion
of my brightly colored,
shell-hard hole.

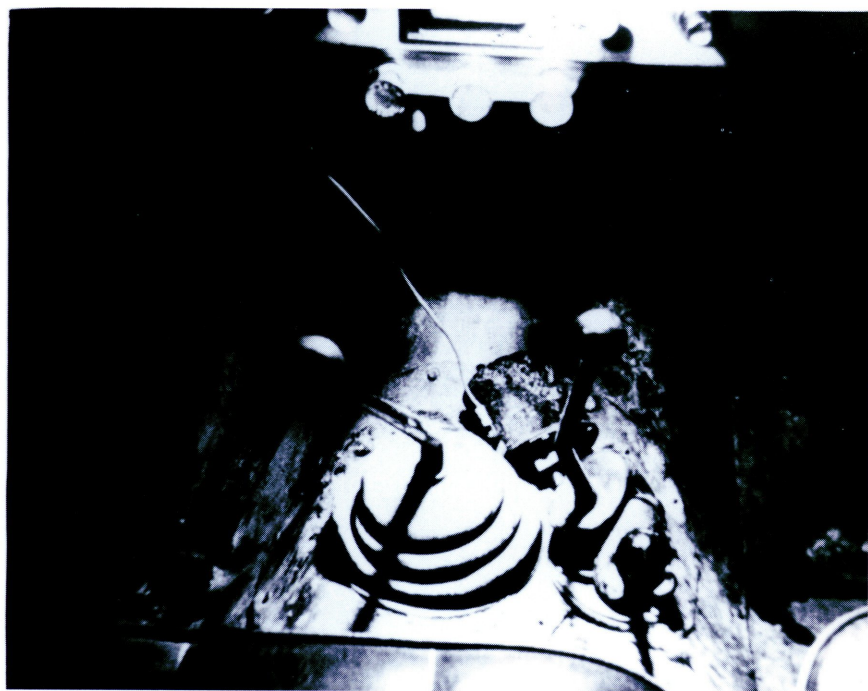
turtle
holly dunlap



Jeep series



chris fogle





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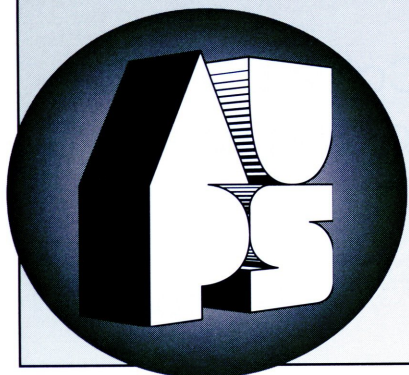
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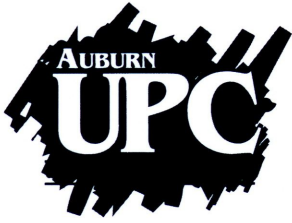
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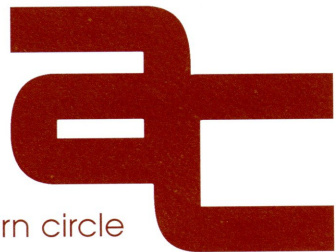
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STUDENT ACT



auburn circle

Aubrey

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